

AMENDMENT

Please amend the Claims as follows:

Claims 1 – 31. (Cancelled)

32. (New) A method of making a floor mat with a tufted pile textile surface and an elastomer backing, the method comprising the steps of mixing elastomer crumbs and a binder, depositing the crumb/binder mixture to form a crumb/binder layer, placing a textile surface element comprising tufts of yarn tufted into a tufting substrate on the crumb/binder layer to form a mat assembly, pressing the mat assembly in a heated press having an inflatable diaphragm while setting the binder, thereby consolidating the elastomer crumbs comprising the crumb/binder layer to form an elastomer backing that includes voids between the elastomer crumbs, and bonding the textile surface element to the elastomer backing, wherein the mat assembly is pressed at a pressure in the range 2-8 psig (14-55 kPa) and at a maximum temperature of 200°C or less to form an elastomer backing with a density in the range 0.5 to 0.9g/cm³.
33. (New) A method according to claim 32, wherein the thickness of the elastomer backing comprising the mat assembly is within the range of 60 to 100% of the thickness of the unpressed crumb/binder layer.
34. (New) A method according to claim 32, wherein the thickness of the elastomer backing comprising the mat assembly is within the range of 65 to 85% of the thickness of the unpressed crumb/binder layer.

35. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the mat assembly is pressed at a maximum temperature in the range 110°C to 140°C.
36. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the mat assembly is pressed at a maximum temperature of about 125°C.
37. (New) A method according to claim 33, wherein the mat assembly is pressed at a maximum temperature in the range 110°C to 140°C.
38. (New) A method according to claim 34, wherein the mat assembly is pressed at a maximum temperature of about 125°C.
39. (New) A method according to 32 wherein the mat assembly is pressed in a plurality of stages including a low temperature stage and a higher temperature stage.
40. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the binder is selected from the group comprising thermosetting and water curable polymeric materials and mixtures thereof, and the mat assembly is pressed in a plurality of stages including at least one low temperature stage followed by at least one higher temperature stage.
41. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the binder is selected from the group comprising thermoplastic polymeric materials, hot melt binders and mixtures thereof, and the mat assembly is pressed in a plurality of stages

including at least one high temperature stage followed by at least one lower temperature stage.

42. (New) A method according to claim 37 wherein the press includes a plurality of zones, including a low temperature zone and a higher temperature zone.
43. (New) A method according to claim 42 wherein the mat assembly is transported through the press in a plurality of steps, so that it is pressed sequentially in each of the plurality of zones.
44. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the mat assembly is transported through the press on a conveyor, and wherein the crumb/binder mixture is deposited on the conveyor using a spreader device that moves at a constant speed relative to the conveyor.
45. (New) A method according to claim 44 wherein the spreader device includes a vibrating doctor blade.
46. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein a continuous textile element is laid on the crumb/binder layer.
47. (New) A method according to claim 37 wherein a continuous textile element is laid on the crumb/binder layer.
48. (New) A method according to claim 37 wherein separate textile elements are laid consecutively on the crumb/binder layer.

49. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein mat borders are produced by spreading the crumb/binder mixture over a larger area than the textile element or elements.
50. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the elastomer crumb is crumbed vulcanized rubber.
51. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein that the elastomer backing has a bulk density in the range 45 to 70% of the solid density of the elastomer crumb material.
52. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the elastomer crumb is crumbed vulcanized nitrile rubber and the elastomer backing has a bulk density in the range 45 to 70% of the solid density of the elastomer crumb material.
53. (New) A method according to claim 37 wherein the elastomer backing has a density in the range 0.7 to 0.9g/cm³.
54. (New) A method according to claim 52 wherein the elastomer backing has a density in the range 0.7 to 0.9g/cm³.
55. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the elastomer crumb is crumbed vulcanized nitrile rubber and the elastomer backing has a bulk

density in the range 55 to 70% of the solid density of the elastomer crumb material.

56. (New) A method according to claim 53 wherein the elastomer backing has a bulk density in the range 55 to 70% of the solid density of the elastomer crumb material
57. (New) A method according to claim 33 wherein the elastomer backing has a thickness of at least 1 mm.
58. (New) A method according to claim 52 wherein the elastomer backing has a thickness of at least 1 mm.
59. (New) A method according to claim 52 wherein the crumb size is substantially in the range of 2 to 4 mm.
60. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the crumb/binder mixture includes at least 10% by weight powdered elastomer crumb.
61. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the crumb/binder mixture includes less than 1% by weight powdered elastomer crumb and from 2 to 12% of binder.
62. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the crumb/binder mixture includes from 2 to 20% by weight of binder.

63. (New) A method according to claim 55 wherein the crumb/binder mixture includes at least 10% by weight powdered elastomer crumb and from 9 to 20% binder.
64. (New) A method according to claim 60 wherein the crumb/binder mixture includes from 9 to 20% by weight of binder.
65. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the binder is a polyurethane MDI binder.
66. (New) A method according to claim 65 in which the binder is selected from the group consisting of 4,4-methylene di-p-phenylene isocyanate (MDI), a polyurethane one-component adhesive, and a polyurethane two-component adhesive.
67. (New) A method according to claim 65 in which the binder is a solvent-free one component polyurethane adhesive.
68. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the binder is a hot melt binder.
69. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the crumb/binder mixture includes powdered additives selected from the group consisting of anti-microbial additives, anti-flammability additives, pigments, and anti-static additives.

70. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein the textile surface comprises a textile selected from the group consisting of a knitted textile, a woven textile, and a non-woven textile.
71. (New) A method according to claim 32 wherein an edging strip is bonded to the elastomer backing adjacent at least one edge thereof.
72. A method according to claim 70 wherein the textile surface element partially overlaps and is bonded to the edging strip

FILING FEE CALCULATION

Basic Filing Fee (International preliminary exam fees not paid to the USPTO, but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO)				\$ 950.00
CLAIMS	Number Filed	Number Extra	Rate	
Total Claims	41 - 20 =	21	X \$18.00	\$378.00
Independent Claims	1 - 3 =	0	X \$88.00	\$ 0.00
TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE CHARGED TO DEPOSIT ACCT. 04-0500				\$1,328.00

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to deduct the fees described above, and any other fees as may be required, from Deposit Account No. 04-0500.